

Dr. Peterson

MOU, Sandia National Laboratories

1:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 9, 2015, Centergy Building, Hodges Room, Suite 335

Dr. Hommart and I just walked over here from a Council on Competitiveness event bringing together national labs, industry, education and government to explore ways to foster innovation. It is very appropriate that on the same day our two organizations are forming an academic alliance to do just that.

Georgia Tech and Sandia National Laboratories have a long history of collaboration. They partner in our research, and hire our students as interns and permanent employees.

Let me share just one example of our ongoing collaboration. David McDowell, Regents Professor with a joint appointment in the School of Materials Science and Engineering and the Woodruff School of Mechanical Engineering. He was a consultant with Sandia for more than a decade. He has played a role in working with the White House on their Materials Genome Initiative. David is a member of Sandia's review panel for the Engineering Sciences Research Foundation. Over the past decade he has shifted his research more heavily toward the use of high performance computing.

Sandia is known for breakthroughs in high performance computing and super computing, among many other things. We have a 750,000 square foot High Performance Computing Center that is being built just down the street.

It will support leading-edge research programs in computing and advanced big data analytics. Georgia Tech will be an anchor tenant, taking one-half of the new 750,000 square-foot development. The HPCC will bring together people in a mixed-use community of innovation, education, and intelligent exchange.

This MOU furthers Georgia Tech's research strategy, which is focused on the pursuit of transformative research, strengthening collaborative partnerships and maximizing the economic and societal impact of our research. Georgia Tech has 12 core research areas, many of which are consistent with the focus areas of Sandia National Lab. Georgia Tech is known for its unique ability to break down traditional academic barriers, which makes assembling interdisciplinary teams much easier. The MOU with Sandia leverages our collaborative culture and willingness to work together to solve tough problems.

Georgia Tech has expertise in commercialization and tech transfer, and the Institute has played a leading role for NSF's I-Corps program. We are looking forward to partnering with Sandia to help them achieve their commercialization goals. We can also partner in the pursuit of large research awards.

Georgia Tech faculty and students are inventive and industrious in our approach to any problem, drawing in the necessary expertise, thinking and tools to come up with solutions that have an amazingly broad spectrum of application. Sandia will continue to be an important part of Georgia Tech's innovation ecosystem, which consists of many different organizations, each with different goals that are aligned to do something for the greater good. The greater good in this case is to provide an environment in which innovation can thrive and students can grow.

It is with great anticipation that Georgia Tech enters into this academic alliance with Sandia National Laboratories.